CLAIMS:

    1.   A medical image service method, wherein an image-registering subscriber permitted to register medical images, an image-receiving

5   subscriber permitted to receive medical images, and a server apparatus for centrally managing medical images are connected via a network; and said server apparatus registers medical images sent by said image-registering subscriber in a database and delivers said medical images to said image-receiving subscriber.

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    2.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein said medical images are those associated with at least one of MRI, X-ray CT, ultrasound, PET, digitized X-ray and CR.

15   3.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises transmitting the medical images compressed in data size on the network, and decompressing the transmitted data into the original data on the receiving end.

20   4.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein said server apparatus checks the legitimacy of said image-registering subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber.

    5.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein said server

25   apparatus makes a backup of the medical images registered in the database.

    6.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein said image-receiving subscriber sends format information including image identifier information to a hard copy device, and said hard copy device obtains delivery

30   of a medical image corresponding to said image identifier information from said server apparatus via said network, and makes a hard copy of the medical image.

    7.   The medical image service method of claim 1, wherein said server

apparatus sends via said network to the delivery destination of a medical image the imaging conditions for the medical image.

8. A medical software service method, wherein a software-executing subscriber permitted to run medical software, and a server apparatus for centrally managing medical software are connected via a network; and said server apparatus registers medical software in a database and delivers said medical software to said software-executing subscriber.

9. A medical image central management server apparatus comprising: a medical image registering device for, when registration of a medical image is requested by an image-registering subscriber connected via a network, registering said medical image in a database; and a medical image delivery device for, when delivery of a medical image is requested by an image-receiving subscriber connected via said network, reading the medical image from said database and delivering the medical image to said image-receiving subscriber.

10. A medical image central management server apparatus comprising: a medical image/imaging condition registering device for, when registration of a medical image is requested by an image-registering subscriber connected via a network, registering said medical image and its imaging conditions in a database; and a medical image/imaging condition delivery device for, when delivery of a medical image is requested by an image-receiving subscriber connected via said network, reading the medical image and imaging conditions from said database and delivering the medical image and imaging conditions to said image-receiving subscriber.

11. A medical software central management server apparatus comprising: a medical software registering device for registering in a database medical software for each software-executing subscriber which is connected via a network and is permitted to run medical software; and a medical software delivery device for delivering said medical software (or the product of its execution) to said software-executing subscriber in response to an access

by said software-executing subscriber.

12. A medical image service system comprising: an image-registering subscriber permitted to register medical images via a network; an image-receiving subscriber permitted to receive medical images via the network; and a server apparatus for registering medical images sent by said image-registering subscriber in a database and delivering said medical images to said image-receiving subscriber.

13. A medical image service system comprising: an image-sending/receiving subscriber permitted to send and receive medical images via a network; and an image processing server apparatus for applying image processing to said medical images and sending the processed medical images back to said image-sending/receiving subscriber.

14. A medical image service system comprising: an image-sending subscriber permitted to send medical images via a network; an image-receiving subscriber permitted to receive medical images via the network; and an image processing server apparatus for applying image processing to medical images sent by said image-sending subscriber and sending the processed medical images to said image-receiving subscriber.

15. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein the system comprises two or more subscribers as at least one member among said image-sending/receiving subscriber, said image-sending subscriber and said image-receiving subscriber.

16. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein the system comprises a plurality of said image processing server apparatuses, and the processing is shared among said image processing server apparatuses.

17. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein at least one of said image-sending/receiving subscriber, said image-sending

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subscriber and said image-receiving subscriber specifies the type of image processing to communicate it to said image processing server apparatus.

18. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein said
5   image processing server apparatus informs said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber of the type of image processing that was applied.

19. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein, when
10   said image processing is completed, said image processing server apparatus establishes communication with said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber and sends the medical image subjected to the image processing to said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber.
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20. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber sends a request for a medical image subjected to the image processing to said image processing server apparatus and receives said medical image via said
20   network.

21. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein said image processing server apparatus stores each medical image in at least one of its form before image processing and its form after image processing.
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22. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber requests said image processing server apparatus to conduct image processing on part or all of the medical images stored in said image processing server
30   apparatus, and receives the medical images subjected to the image processing from said image processing server apparatus.

23. The medical image service system of claim 13 or 14, wherein said image processing server apparatus polls said image-sending/receiving

subscribers or said image-sending subscribers via said network to collect medical images before image processing.

24. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein said medical images are those associated with at least one of MRI, X-ray CT, ultrasound, PET, digitized X-ray and CR.

25. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein the system transmits the medical images compressed in data size on the network, and decompresses the transmitted data into the original data on the receiving end.

26. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein said server apparatus comprises security device for checking the legitimacy of said subscribers.

27. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein said server apparatus comprises backup device for making a backup of the medical images registered in the database.

28. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein said image-sending/receiving subscriber or said image-receiving subscriber sends format information including image identifier information to a hard copy device, and said hard copy device makes a hard copy of a medical image sent by said server apparatus via said network.

29. The medical image service system of any one of claims 12 — 14, wherein said server apparatus sends via said network to the delivery destination of a medical image the imaging conditions for the medical image.

30. A medical software service system wherein the system comprises: a software-executing subscriber permitted to run medical software via a network; and a server apparatus for registering medical software in a database and for delivering said medical software to said software-executing

subscriber via said network.

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B'
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